

INTRODUCING THE CONSUMER ASSURANCE OF RADIOLOGIC EXCELLENCE BILL

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Consumer Assurance of Radiologic Excellence Bill.

I ask for your support in moving this legislation forward. The CARE bill is an important piece of patient-care legislation. It will improve the quality of radiologic procedures performed throughout the United States as well as assist in reducing the cost incurred by the Federal government for these procedures.

The CARE bill in the 108th Congress had 111 bi-partisan House cosponsors and no known opposition. Passage of this bill will finally provide American patients with national standards to ensure that their radiologic procedures are performed by personnel who are trained, qualified and competent.

I am proud to sponsor this legislation because the safety and quality of radiologic procedures is an issue that affects all of us. Every year, more than 300 million x-rays, CT scans, MRIs and other medical imaging exams are performed in the United States, and seven out of 10 people undergo some type of radiologic procedure. So much depends upon the quality and accuracy of those examinations. After all, if an x-ray is poor, there is a chance that injuries could go undetected or diseases could go undiagnosed.

Most of us take it for granted that the person performing our radiologic procedures is a competent professional. But the fact is, poorly trained individuals examine and treat thousands of patients in this country every day.

The CARE bill will help correct that problem. You see, one of the best ways to assure quality radiologic procedures is to require a basic level of education and skill for the people responsible for performing these procedures.

The CARE bill would provide this level of assurance by amending a previous law, known as the Consumer-Patient Radiation Health and Safety Act of 1981. Twenty-two years ago, this bill established minimum standards for the education, certification and licensure of radiologic technologists. However, when the bill was enacted, compliance by the states was made voluntary rather than mandatory. As a result, radiographers in 13 states and the District of Columbia are unregulated. Even in states that license radiologic technologists, laws vary so widely that there is no guarantee that personnel are adequately educated to use the equipment with which they have been entrusted.

Under the CARE bill, personnel performing radiologic procedures in every state would be required to meet minimum educational and credentialing standards. Each state would then be responsible for regulating radiologic technologists according to those standards.

The current lack of a national standard for operators of medical imaging and radiation therapy equipment poses a hazard to American patients and jeopardizes quality health care. Accurate diagnosis can be provided only

when personnel are properly educated in anatomy, technique, equipment operation and radiation safety.

In states where no regulation exists, anyone is permitted to perform medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures, sometimes after just a few weeks of on-the-job training. But performing a CT scan or taking an x-ray involves much more than just pushing a button. The person responsible for performing the exam uses highly technical equipment that emits radiation.

The CARE bill will help ensure that quality radiation therapy treatments are delivered and that quality diagnostic information is presented for interpretation, which will lead to accurate diagnosis, treatment and cure. Poor quality exams can lead to additional testing, delays in treatment, and unnecessary anxiety for the patient. In the end, the public's health is at stake. An underexposed chest x-ray cannot reveal pneumonia, and an inaccurate radiation therapy treatment cannot stop the spread of cancer.

This legislation will also reduce health care costs by lowering the number of medical imaging examinations that must be repeated due to improper positioning or poor technique. Repeated imaging examinations cost the U.S. health care system millions of dollars annually in needless medical bills.

Millions of Americans every year depend upon medical imaging exams to diagnose disease and detect injury, and thousands more rely on radiation therapy to treat and cure their cancers. But remember, any radiologic procedure is only as effective as the person performing it. No matter how expensive or sophisticated the equipment, an imaging exam will not reveal a broken bone or a diseased organ if the person who is using that equipment does not know the basics of radiographic positioning, exposure and technique.

By regulating the personnel responsible for performing those procedures, the CARE bill will mean improved care for patients—higher quality images, improved accuracy, and less exposure to radiation.

I urge all my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to support this legislation and enact it in a timely manner so American patients will receive the best care possible, provided by the best caregivers possible.

IN MEMORY OF LOWELL C.
"BUTCH" SPIRES, JR.

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Monday, March 14, 2005, a great Statesman, friend and father passed away quietly. Known as "Butch" to those who loved him, was Lowell Colquit Spires, Jr. of Cayce. Outside of his many accomplishments, one of the great assets he had was his family and friends. He lived his life with honor, dignity and character. Opinionated and forthright in his speech, Butch's love for his community and fellow man spoke louder than anything else. He worked for the betterment of his commu-

nity and the impact it would accomplish for future generations. Butch set a mark in which his friends and family will always be honored for and grateful. Though his life was too short for those of us whom are left, his strength and love will always be a constant in our lives. The list of accomplishments in no way reveal the impact he has had on many people. He used to say, "The utmost a man can do is to give without hesitation. The character of our life is defined by how we love and live, not by what we personally obtain."

Born in Columbia on May 12, 1941, Butch was a son of the late Lowell C. and Margaret Estelle Love Spires, Sr. A lifelong resident, he was a member of Kitti Wake Baptist Church. Married to Gail Julian Spires since August 26, 1960, Butch was employed as president with WestBank Consultants, LLC, and was Special Projects Coordinator for the Town of Lexington. He was tireless in his accomplishments over the years. He served on the Lexington County Council from 1977–1995, as chairman in 1979, 1991 and 1993. He was one of Lexington County's representatives to CMCOG 1977–1983, 1993–present. Butch was vice-chairman of Central Midlands Council of Governments in 1978–79 and 1993–94, and chairman in 1979–80 and 1994–95. He served ten terms on the CMCOG Executive Committee, which included the Transportation Planning Subcommittee. This committee facilitated formation of the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority from 1999–2002, of which he was chairman from 2002–present. On this committee, Butch spearheaded funding and construction in the Central Midlands Region of 27 years of highway improvements in seven years through SCDOT's Bonding Program.

Butch was instrumental in securing funding to ensure continued development of Riverbanks Zoo, the economic development of the Midlands and Lexington County for over thirty years, and the development of the Columbia Convention Center. He originated CMCOG Wetlands Mitigation Bank, currently under development.

A charter member of Central Carolina Economic Development Alliance, Butch was also past president of the South Carolina Association of Regional Councils, past chairman of Lexington County Recreation of Aging Commission, and past president of the S.C. Association of Counties. He was currently a board member of the River Alliance since 1994, of which he originated the concept of 3-Rivers Greenway, member of West Metro and Greater Columbia Chambers of Commerce, served on the boards of Lexington Medical Center and the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School.

His honors include: Recipient of Order of Palmetto, first recipient of the CMCOG Regional Leadership Award in 2005, Transportation Association of SC Outstanding Achievement Award in 2003 for his support and advocacy of public transportation, named SC Ambassador for Economic Development by Governor Carroll Campbell in 1994, President's Cup for Distinguished Service in 1986, Woodrow Wilson Award in 1986, and recipient of the District Lay Award for SC Recreation and Parks Society in 1980.

Surviving, besides his wife are, daughter and son-in-law, Mindy Spires-Miller and Chuck Miller of Mt. Pleasant; sons and daughters-in-

law, Lowell C. "Corky" and Cindy Spires, III of West Columbia, Randall "Randy" and Corrine Spires of Greenwood Village, CO; brothers, Nash Lagrand Spires of Birmingham, AL, Zane Erwin Spires of West Columbia; grandchildren, Brittany Spires Farley (Christopher I.), Meagan Noel Spires, Ian Juliano Spires, Katherine Rose Fallon Spires, Garrett Lowell Lacy, and Addy Marie Brooks Lacy.

RELEASE CUBAN POLITICAL PRISONER REGIS IGLESIAS RAMÍREZ

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the two-year anniversary of the brutal crackdown on political opposition by the Cuban regime. In partial commemoration of this ignoble milestone, my dear friend and colleague ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and I have launched an "adopt a political prisoner" initiative to help focus the spotlight of international attention on those suffering in Cuban jails because of their inextinguishable faith in the power of democratic liberty.

I rise today to inform my colleagues that I stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Cuban political prisoner Regis Iglesias Ramírez.

Mr. Speaker, as an outspoken advocate of human rights in Cuba, Mr. Iglesias is a member of the Coordinating Board for the Christian Liberation Movement. He is also a principal organizer of the Varela Project, a grassroots, civic movement that petitions the Cuban government to allow its citizens to exercise their fundamental human rights. To date, this project has collected and presented over 25,000 signatures to the proper Cuban authorities. Because of his admirable efforts and political activism, Mr. Iglesias was arrested on March 20, 2003, during a wave of repression which was directed against the peaceful Cuban opposition. After weeks of interrogations and psychological torture, he was sentenced to 18 years in prison for the alleged crime of "acts against the independence or territorial integrity of the state"—a common charge that dictatorial states have levied against democracy and human rights advocates for far too long.

Mr. Iglesias was born in Havana on September 18, 1969. He loves to read classical literature and admires leaders of peaceful yet forceful advocacy such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. He is an educated, hard-working man who lives with passion—a passion to live in a democracy where basic civil and political liberties are respected. It is because of his uncompromising commitment to fight for these democratic freedoms that Castro's regime stripped him of his liberty.

Mr. Speaker, the abuses against Regis Iglesias Ramírez are horrendous. He has been repeatedly imprisoned for promoting the very ideals that we hold self-evident, and for calling out to his neighbors and fellow citizens to join him in a cry for freedom from a cruel, totalitarian regime. As Members of Congress, we

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

must take the lead to ensure that these atrocities are stopped. I call upon the Cuban government to release Mr. Iglesias and to end human rights abuse. Let freedom's influence be felt not only in the halls of Capitol Hill, but also in the prison cells of Havana.

FREEDOM FOR ANTUNEZ

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak about Jorge Luis Garcia Perez, often known Antunez, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

My distinguished friend and colleague, Representative ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, had a great idea for Members of Congress to "adopt" a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba. Today, I "adopt" an extraordinary leader of unlimited courage, Jorge Luis Garcia Perez (Antunez).

Antunez has been locked in the totalitarian gulag since 1990. In a sham trial, he was sentenced to 6 years in prison for "oral enemy propaganda." In May 1993, he was tried in a second sham trial, and sentenced to an additional 15 years to be served from that moment. In total, Antunez has been sentenced to 18 years in Castro's grotesque, inhuman gulag.

Despite being enslaved in the tyrant's gulag, Antunez has bravely carried out nonviolent activism in Cuban jails, writing reports on prison conditions and carrying out numerous protests and hunger strikes to demand more humane treatment for prisoners. He has never wavered in his commitment to human rights and democracy for the Cuban people. Antunez has never given in to the beatings, the punishment cells and the instruments of torture inflicted on him by the Castro regime. Antunez always rises up and calls out, demanding human rights and freedom for the people and the nation of Cuba.

After 15 years in the gulag, Antunez is still feared and relentlessly attacked by the dictatorship. According to the Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004, "on July 6, family members of political prisoner Jorge Luis Garcia Perez, reported being beaten along with Garcia during a prison visit. Authorities handcuffed and beat Garcia and later punched his sister and kicked his girlfriend's 9 year old son after the visitors protested the harsh treatment."

No matter how intense the repression, no matter how horrifically brutal the consequences to him and his family, Antunez will not waiver in his conviction that Cuba should be and will be free. He is a symbol of dignity and heroic resistance to tyranny.

Mr. Speaker, this courageous man has been in Castro's gulag since 1990, for failing to keep silent about the nightmare that is the Castro regime. My Colleagues, Antunez is the face of the real Cuba. We must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Jorge Luis Garcia Perez and every prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

March 17, 2005

TRIBUTE TO MARY LOU ZOGLIN

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker. I rise today to honor a distinguished American and community leader, Mary Lou Zoglin who passed away last week.

Mary Lou Zoglin was committed to serving her community whether it was with non-profits or through community service. She was the executive director of Healthy Ventures, a consortium of schools and other agencies dedicated to the well-being of children. She later served on the California Community Colleges Board of Governors and the Foothill-De Anza Community College Board. In the early 1990s, Mary Lou turned her public service to the City of Mountain View where she joined the city's Planning Commission. In 1996, she was elected to the Mountain View city Council where she served for 8 years, and one term as Mayor.

During her tenure with the City Council, Mary Lou Zoglin focused her public service on ensuring that the community has a continuum of human services from the time children are in preschool to high school and then into adulthood. She worked tirelessly to see that all members of the community are served by the city, not just those who are the most vocal or economically advantaged. She was instrumental in the construction of San Antonio Place, an affordable housing project in Mountain View which broke ground last year. She also fought for the creation of child-care centers, for improvements to city parks and for resources for youth, including after school programs.

Beyond her dedication to public service, Mrs. Zoglin was committed to her family and an avid student of foreign languages and cultures. She earned her college degree from Radcliffe College where she studied Romance languages and later won a Fulbright scholarship to study in Brussels, Belgium. Upon her return, she met her husband in the early 1950s while they were both in New York. They moved to Los Altos in 1956 where they began their family. Her children, John, Katie and Bill, were raised in this close-knit community and she recently became a proud grandmother of twin grandchildren.

Despite her 5-year battle with cancer and her small frame, Mary Lou Zoglin was frequently described as a "powerhouse" and a "dynamo." She found true joy in working with people in the community and making their dreams a reality.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this good and great woman for her lifetime of remarkable achievements and in extending to her family our deepest sympathy. Our community and our country have lost a true friend and an extraordinary leader.